Networking for Scientific Careers

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CIMSS 7/24/13: "From Degree to Career"

Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies
Center for Sustainability and the Global Environment (SAGE)
University of Wisconsin Madison

Academic Support & Enrichment Center

SAMPLE CV

NAME
Address
City, State, Postal Code
Phone
E-mail address@domain.com

Career Objective

Who am I? Where am I going?

Education

Degree, Date
Name of Institution (Higher Education), Dat

Honors and Awards:

Relevant Courses:
Include a brief description of courses, module
dissertation topic, areas of special interest, etc

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Employment Experience

Title of job, Name and location of employer
Date
Description of duties, responsibilities. Emphasize sk
development and business experience.

Other Experience

Include all work and experience including voluntary. Y
may decide to omit some if you don't feel they help mu
but remember that the most obscure jobs can provide
evidence of skill development.

Skills and Achievements

Identify your key skills. Group these in functional areas
Describe some experiences in terms of achievement.
Indicate level of competence if more than one language is
spoken.

Certifications

Abstracts/Publications

Professional Organizations

SAMPLE

www.ecu.edu/ascc

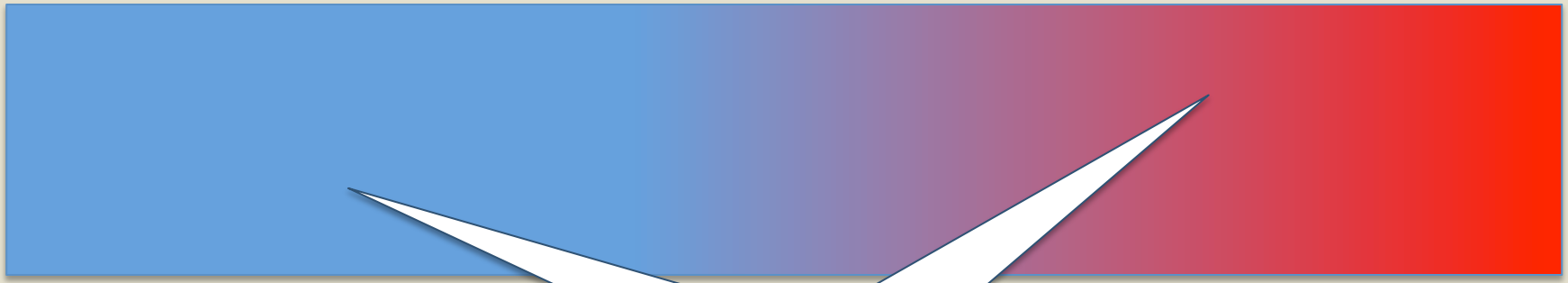
Fax: (252) 744-2501

MacArthur Foundation

Networking & Me

- Founding ESWN & ES Jobs Net
- Led Cutting Edge Webinar (*"Networking for Academic Careers,"* 5/13)
- Helped develop ESWN Training programs (*"Networking for Scientific Careers,"* 6/12)
- Aldo Leopold Leadership Program (2 weeks training on leadership & networking)
- Lots collaborative work + lots of hats on campus
- Informal work with students
- My networking gurus: Kerry Ann Rockquemore (NCFDD) & Chris Olex

In a recent Rutgers study…

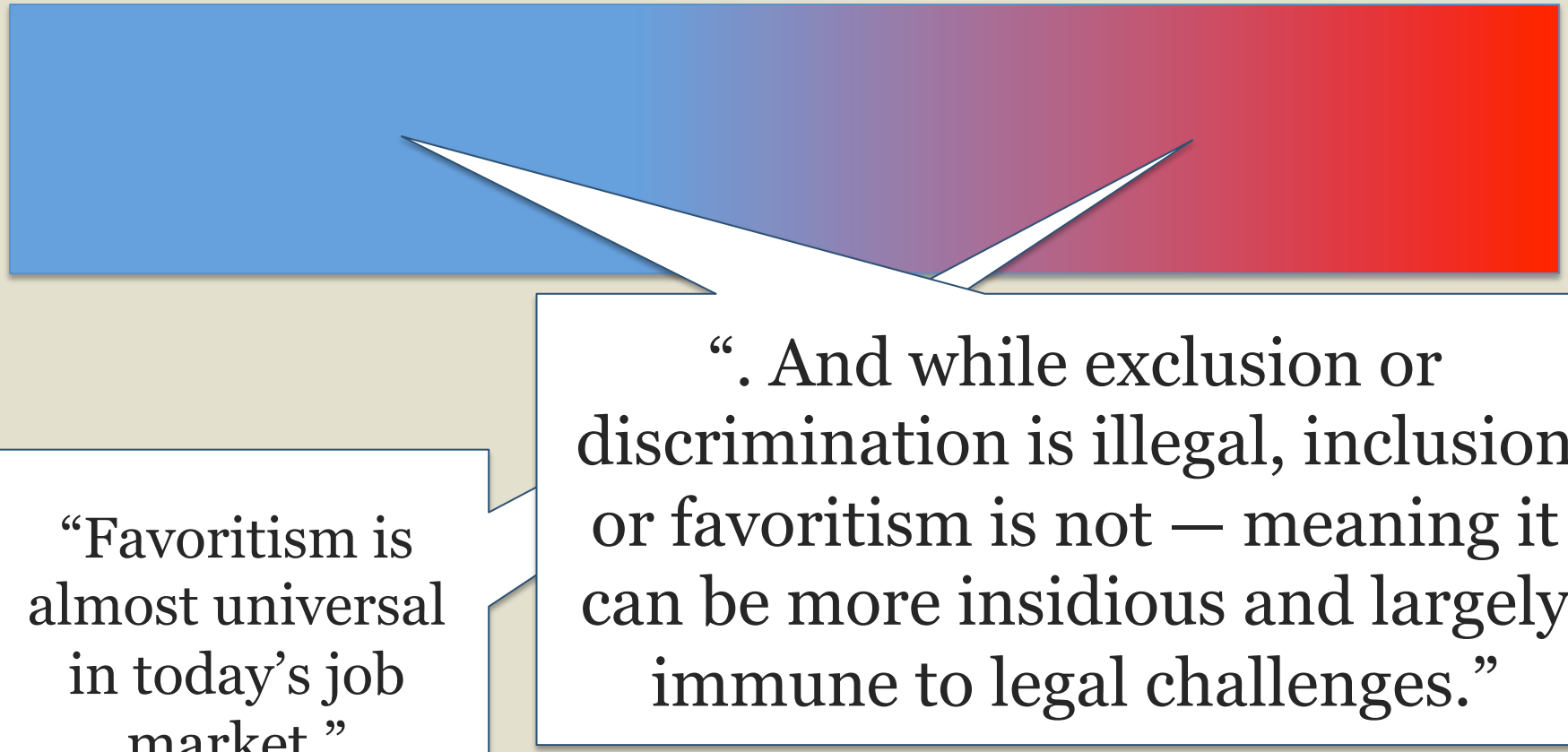


"…help of family and friends to find **70%** of the jobs they held over their lifetimes; they all used personal networks and insider information if it was available to them"

"..only **14%** mentioned that they had received help of any kind from others"

http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/05/05/how-social-networks-drive-black-unemployment/

Can we separate professional networking from favoritism?



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What is “networking” (for scientists)?

- **Engaging people to evaluate our work** (reference letters, reviewers, nominators, grant managers, informal feedback, etc.)
- **Connect w/ people who are interested in our work**, and vice versa (research conferences, department seminars, speaker invitations, journalists, twitter, blogs, collaborators, new ideas)
- **Navigating a specialized job market** (tenure letters, grant managers, hiring initiatives, sharing information, getting advice)
- **Supporting our students** (introducing them to alumni & experts, bring them to conferences, sending job announcements, advise on online identity issues)

Networking & Jobs

Most permanent jobs: publicly announced; competitively awarded

But they still depend on your references, reputation, community engagement, etc.

Networking & Jobs

Many opportunities require personal connections: Award nominations, collaborations, mentoring

Institutions (usually) build *opportunities* for these connections... but individuals are expected to engage

Networking & Jobs

Do you know all the opportunities out there? Do you know when and where advice would be helpful?

Formal or informal networks can help you with the "unknown unknowns"

GAME: Count 1 point for each thing you've done *today*...

- Met a student you didn't know already
- Met a non-student you didn't know
- Introduced yourself to a new person
- Talked about your research (even a little)
- Asked someone about their research
- Shared your next career goal (e.g. looking for a post-doc next year)
- Took down contact info or got business card

Tracey's Tip #1:

3 ways to make 2 minutes of conversation with any scientist: "Hi, my name is ____..."

1) "...I really enjoyed your talk – do you have a paper out related to that work?"
2) "... I wanted to introduce myself because _____"
3) "... I'm working on ___, and was wondering what you thought about ____?"

Tracey's Tip #1.5:

3 ways to make 30 minutes of conversation with any scientist:

1) "Could you tell me a little more about your research?"
2) "How did you decide to pursue _____?"
3) "Do you have any advice for someone on the job market?" (etc.)

Tracey's Top 9 Places for Scientific Networking

- 5 minutes before department seminar
- Obligatory meetings with visiting speakers
- Quasi-social events, especially w/ peers
- Big conferences + brief convo + email follow-up
- Small conferences + longer convo + email follow-up
- Offer to help with seminar, outreach activities, etc.
- Email + coffee with (would be) mentor
- Twitter + email or real-life follow-up
- Your webpage (you never know who's looking!)

GAME: I just met you, and I think you are great! How can I find more information about you? *(1 point per answer)*

- Webpage with your photo & contact info
- An up-to-date CV linked from your webpage
- A list of your publications linked from your webpage
- Description of your research + related work interests on webpage
- A LinkedIn page
- A Facebook page you'd be happy for an employer to see
- Info about you on your advisor's or dept. webpage

Tracey's Tip #2:

Never underestimate the power of a good webpage

“So you want a post-doc” Networking: Option #1

1) Set up in-person (or phone) meetings with mentors, former professors and other contacts.
2) Bring a copy of your CV &/or other info
3) Ask for their advice. Take notes. Nod.
4) Ask them who else you should talk to.
5) Follow up with a thank-you note & updates

Why it works

- Gets the word out that you are on the market (or whatever your goal)
- Reminds potential advocates who you are, and why they like you so much
- Gives you immediate feedback on strategy
- Makes mentors feel like they are part of your team → advocates/sponsors
- Builds your network
- Personal recommendation very powerful
- "If you want $, ask for advice" (and if you want advice, ask for advice)

“So you want a post-doc” Networking: Option #2

1) Find people with whom you would like to work
2) Email with your CV and a super-polite, positive “cover” letter. Be specific about why them. Compliment their work.
3) Doesn’t matter if they are advertising or not (or for a level higher/lower than yours)
4) **Worst case**: you put yourself on the radar of a potential employer, but no response

Best case: Unadvertised opportunities, or they forward your email to others.

Why it works

- Many jobs are not well advertised
- Many job opportunities are “emailed around”
- In academics, skills/backgrounds are highly specialized… Your future employer needs to know you exist.
- Even if this person/org is not hiring now, they may remember you for the future.

Tracey's Tip #3:

Make it as easy as possible for future employers, funders, etc. to "find you" through professional networks

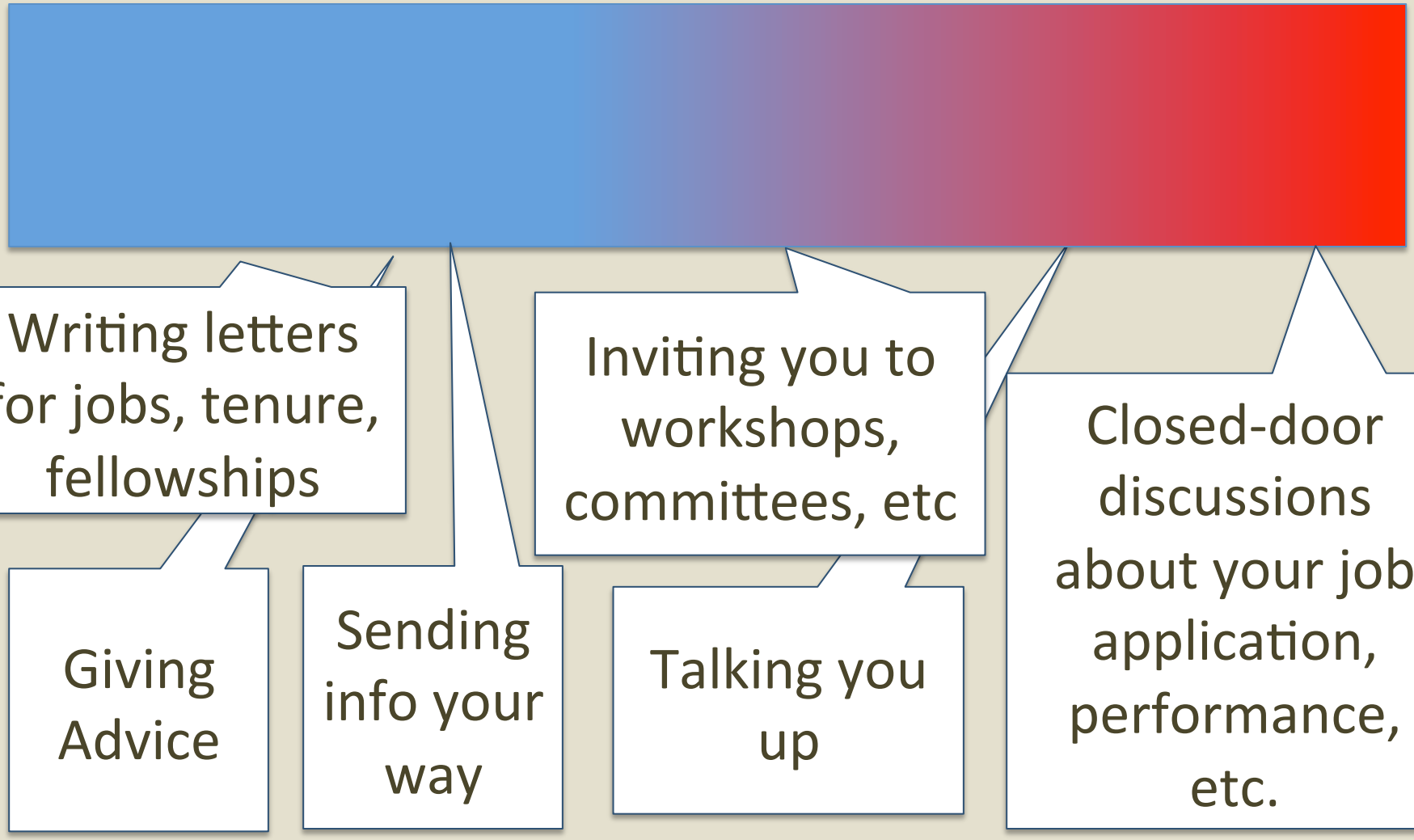
You have the job… Why keep networking?

- Who will write your recommendation letters? Tenure letters?
- Who will invite you for talks? Suggest you for panels? nominate you for awards?
- Who will give you career advice?
- Who will invite you to collaborate?
- Who will review your papers & grants?
- Who will be on the job search committee?
- Who will give you the “inside scoop”?
- Who will give you feedback on your work?
- …

Mentors and Sponsors

- High-value members of your network, *especially* in academia.
- Cultivate mentors who know your work, who feel invested in you.
- Sponsors impact how you are discussed "behind closed doors." Invested mentors are excellent sponsors.
- Your "mentors" do not need to be official… Just helpful senior/peer colleagues

How Can Mentors/Sponsors Help?



Science that Networks

- Publishing papers, building reputation
- Attending meetings, connecting w/ peers
- Visiting other people's posters/talks, "
- Reviewing papers, engaging w/ journals
- Reviewing proposals (especially panels), engaging w/ funding agencies
- Ph.D. committee members etc., building sponsors
- Call program managers, let them know you
- Attending seminars, engaging with dept.
- Meet with visiting speakers, connecting w/ outside experts (+ other disciplines)

Final Thoughts

- The easiest way to network is to volunteer to help others
- The 2nd easiest way is to promote other people (nominate someone for an award, invite students to meet a visiting speaker, e-introduce two colleagues)
- Know your boundaries, and work within a space that is comfortable for you

Time for Questions

Thank you!

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